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ABSTRACT

A careful review of the literature and an examination of desegregation programs in Los Angeles, show that the claim that voluntary programs produce almost no desegregation, and certainly less than mandatory programs, is open to question. Most comparisons between voluntary and mandatory programs have been between cities and have not taken into account variables such as differing demographic characteristics, the relative proportions of students in voluntary and mandatory transfers, the source of the desegregration plan, and the extent of the plan. The combination of voluntary and mandatory programs in Los Angeles provides an opportunity to analyze and compare the effect of voluntary and mandatory components within the city and also across cities. Analysis of Los Angeles' voluntary one-way transfer program, magnet school program, and a court-ordered desegregation plan shows that for blacks there is a larger differential effect of voluntary programs relative to mandatory reassignments in terms of (1) the percentage white school population for the average black student; and (2) the segregation index. There were some differences among elementary, junior high, and high school levels. For Hispanics and Asians, both types of programs had little effect. Other multi-ethnic cities show the same kind of results. These results, along with the fact that the change in the segregation index for blacks achieved by Los Angeles' voluntary measures exceeded the reduction in racial imbalance achieved by many court-ordered northern desegregation plans, shows that standard methods of comparison do not adequately address the issue of effectiveness. (CMG)

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EFFECTIVENESS OF ALTERNATIVE DESEGREGATION STRATEGIES:
The Issue of Voluntary Versus Mandatory Policies in Los Angeles

Part 1: 1979

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Effectiveness of alternative desegregation strategies

1. Introduction:

Most voluntary desegregation programs have been criticized by advocates of mandatory reassignment policies as being only token measures and being, at best, throw-backs to "freedom-of-choice" plans offered by southern school districts in the 1960's. At the same time, opponents of court-ordered desegregation have attacked mandatory desegregation as ineffective and counter-productive in the long run because of extensive "white flight." Advocates of both positions can cite selected examples (usually different cities) to support their argument while conveniently ignoring other cities that are less compatable with their partisan claims.

The central issue in the "mandatory versus voluntary" desegregation debate is the mixture of coercion and choice necessary to stimulate white participation in desegregated schools. Mandatory school desegregation policies rely upon some external pressure to compel white parents to send their children to schools located in minority neighborhoods in order to desegregate these schools. Implicit in the mandatory position is the assumption that few whites would voluntarily select a school in a minority neighborhood, even if the school had special educational programs not available to white parents at their segregated white neighborhood schools. In contrast, voluntary school desegregation policies emphasize attracting students (both white and minority) whose parents want a desegregated education, without incurring unnecessary costs in the form of substantial white withdrawal (or non-participation) from the public schools that is associated with most, if not all, mandatory plans. In addition, educational innovations are facilitated by the creation of specialized magnet programs necessary to induce students to attend the magnet schools that often are quite distant from the student's normal neighborhood school (Levine and Havinghurst, 1977).

In recent years, the sharp distinction between the two positions has become less pronounced as supporters of mandatory proposals have now endorsed magnet programs as a "back-up" component of a mandatory desegregation plan. In this context, parents, if they do not wish to leave the public school system for private schools, can choose between a desegregated magnet school or the school designated by the court-designed desegregation plan. Viewed as a "safety valve," a magnet school program can reduce white losses to a more manageable level and dampen hostility to "forced busing" by allowing the more active and vocal parents to exercise a certain amount of choice in the selection of schools

their children will attend.

This partisan debate has often obscured critical policy issues by comparing the amount of desegregation achieved by mandatory and voluntary school assignment policies implemented in cities that also vary in:

a) the extent of their desegregation plan (partial v. city-wide);
b) the source of the desegregation plan (court-ordered or board-initiated);
c) the relative proportion of students involved in voluntary and mandatory transfers;
d) the minority student population and other demographic characteristics of different districts, etc.

In contrast to other school desegregation controversies, the question of voluntary versus mandatory policies should be amenable to more objective and systematic research. At a minimum, there is general agreement by school desegregation researchers on two criteria useful in measuring certain desegregation outcomes:

1) the amount of interracial contact between minority students and white students, and
2) the relative degree of racial imbalance (or racial isolation) within a school district.

In section four, we will review the methodological procedures employed by social science researchers to assess desegregation outcomes and present a detailed example of the numerical calculations for measures of interracial contact.

2. Research Review

Given the potential value of alternative school desegregation policies, there is surprisingly little research on the relative effectiveness of voluntary methods. An early review by Foster (1973) concluded that open-enrollment policies "had never accounted for a significant amount of desegregation." However, his analysis did not make a distinction between controlled transfers for the purpose of increasing integration and open-enrollment policies where whites can transfer out of transitional and changing schools to more predominantly white schools. This position against voluntary programs has been consistently advocated by the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights (1967). Based

upon a comparative review of one hundred and thirteen schools districts, Rossell (1981:1) concluded that voluntary plans "rarely result in more than a 10 point reduction in segregation." (A 10 point reduction refers to a yearly change in the dissimilarity index, a standardized measure of racial balance.) Hawley et al. (1981:20), based upon a comprehensive review of the research, state that "Voluntary desegregation is not an effective strategy in reducing racial isolation except in districts with small proportions of minority enrollment," and "If one's goal is actual desegregation, a voluntary plan is not a feasible option for most big city school districts" (Rossell and Hawley, 1981:171).

In a more detailed analysis of eighteen "representative" communities including eight with magnet-only (voluntary) components, Rossell (1979) found that these more varied plans "cannot reduce racial isolation more than a few percentage points in school districts over 30 percent minority." However, the three magnet-only northern cities with over thirty percent minority student populations in this study (Milwaukee, Buffalo and San Diego) do not appear to be notable examples of ineffective voluntary programs upon closer examination. For example, Milwaukee was able to reduce the degree of segregation between Black and white students in the first year of its plan by 23 points without any mandatory reassignment of white students (a change equivalent to the first year of court-ordered desegregation in Boston) and another 16 points in the second and third year of its phased-in plan. In addition, the percentage white in the average Black students's school in Milwaukee increased 19.0 percent to 37.8 percent over this three year period (Farley, 1981). After three years of a city-wide mandatory plan, Boston had only a 11.2 percent gain in racial contact by 1977, although the plan itself should have led to an increase of 26.4 percent white for the average Black student had there been only "normal" demographic loss and no "white flight" (Ross and Rossell, 1981). Likewise, Buffalo (43 percent Black in 1976) first attained a reduction of -18.7 points in segregation in 1967 (Rossell, 1978) primarily though voluntary transfers, a decline of 7.8 points between 1974 and 1976, and another drop by 1978 of 21.4 points in the index of dissimilarity (Farley, 1981). During the 1974 to 1978 period in Buffalo, the percent white for the average Black pupil rose 14.6 percent.

Finally, San Diego's voluntary plan is more difficult to evaluate since the school system was only 14.5 percent Black and 14.0 percent Hispanic when its voluntary plan was expanded in 1977. Nevertheless, between 1968 and 1976, San Diego had already managed an 18.7 point reduction in its segregation index for

Black and white students and in the following two years a further decline of 10.1 points. Between Hispanic and white students, the segregation index, however, increased by 5.1 points between 1968 and 1978 (Farley, 1981). During this period, the percentage white for the average Black student gradually increased from 26.3 percent in 1968 to 39.1 percent in 1979, despite a fourteen percent decline in the percent white. In contrast, San Francisco, another multi-ethnic city, had a 26 point reduction in 1971 with a court-ordered plan. However, the large gain in the amount of Black contact with white students (6.9 percent) in that year was followed by a drop of 4.6 percent in the next four years, resulting in a net gain of only 2.3 percent for the average Black student because of continued "white flight."

In the Rossell analysis, the comparable large central cities (Dayton and Boston) with combined magnet/mandatory programs did eliminate somewhat more segregation than the magnet-only cities, if one considers only the first implementation year. However, both Boston and Dayton had substantial implementation year losses of white students (Dayton, -17.5 percent; Boston, -14.9 percent in 1974 and -20.0 percent in 1975). In contrast, both Buffalo and Milwaukee had lower than expected rates of "white flight" (-4.8 and -10.8 percent respectively) given the change in segregation, their racial composition and the availability of white suburbs as measured by the amount of central city and suburban segregation (Ross, Gratton and Clarke, 1981). The other three cities with combined magnet/mandatory plans and over 30 percent minority populations (Springfield, Stockton and Montclair) are only comparable to the magnet-only school districts in terms of their minority percentage. The average student population for these magnet/mandatory districts was only 19,000 and each district was only moderately segregated (33 average dissimilarity score) prior to the implementation of a court-ordered plan.

In the Rossell (1979) study, the evidence from school districts with less than thirty percent minority is, upon more careful review, even more problematic for the proposition that voluntary programs rarely account for a significant amount of desegregation. First, two southern county districts (such as Jefferson County/Louisville) should be considered separately unless a comparable central city to suburb voluntary plan, such as the METCO program in Boston, is included. Second, Racine (-19.0 percent in 1975) and Tacoma (-17.9 percent in 1968) must be instances of those rare exceptions where non-mandatory policies do accomplish substantial reductions in segregation. Likewise, Portland, with a

well publicized Black participation rate of thirty-five percent in a one-way transfer program, had a change of -10.3 in 1972 and a total decline in segregation of 18.1 points between 1971 and 1976 [Royster et. al.(1979) give 1974 as the implementation year]. In contrast, none of the three northern court-ordered city school districts (St. Paul in 1975, Des Moines in 1977 and Tulsa in 1971) achieved a reduction of more than 10 points in the standardized index of segregation (-8.0,-7.2,-8.8, respectively) in their implementation year (Rossell, 1978). In other words, the voluntary programs managed to accomplish more desegregation than the mandatory programs in every case for northern central cities with less than 30 percent minority populations.

A recently released study of twenty-two large school districts probably will not help clarify the more important empirical questions. The major finding that "Voluntary desegregation strategies have not reduced racial isolation as effectively as mandatory desegregation strategies," (Smylie, 1981:9) has to be cautiously interpreted in the context of its measure of "effectiveness," namely a standardized measure of racial balance. By definition, most city-wide (comprehensive) mandatory plans can distribute students more evenly throughout a school system in a manner that provides a better balance in the percentage white than can a voluntary plan. However, without considering the actual changes in the percentage white for the average minority student over the long run, it is not possible to assess the effectiveness of any plan given the influence of "white flight." Seven northern cities in the Smylie study had substantial increases in the rate of white withdrawal in the year when mandatory desegregation was implemented and most districts had higher than normal losses in post-implementation years. As a consequence, the percentage white for the average minority student was considerably lower than would be expected without an accelerated rate of white withdrawal due to desegregation. Eventually, this situation can only lead to the creation of a predominantly minority school system as occured in Boston.

The Smylie analysis dramatically illustrates all the difficulties of aggregate comparative analysis in assessing alternative desegregation strategies. First, the twenty-two districts are not representative of large central cities and there are no adequate controls for basic demographic differences such as racial composition and region or even whether the plan is court-ordered or board-initiated. Second, multi-ethnic districts such as San Diego, Los Angeles, and Seattle require a separate analysis for each ethnic

group. Third, southern metropolitan plans must be treated as a special category since there are few large county districts in the north and the possible formation of consolidated metropolitan plans are limited by the extent of inter-district liabilities.

Since the Rossell (1979), Royster et al.(1979), and Smylie (1981) studies are the only semi-systematic comparative research on voluntary school desegregation programs, it is somewhat perplexing how the above evidence is frequently cited to support the proposition that "voluntary plans produce almost no desegregation" (Rossell and Hawley, 1981:171). Historically, freedom-of-choice plans in the South certainly did not achieve much, if any, desegregation prior to 1970 and, as a result, extensive mandatory reassignment plans probably were the only available option to dismantle a segregated dual school system. The extension of this argument to northern school systems is problematic and the empirical evidence is quite weak. Many northern school systems, including some large cities such as Milwaukee, have managed to substantially reduce, although not totally eliminate, segregation by voluntary transfers, magnet schools and school closings (with mandatory reassignment of Black students to formerly white schools). Only advocates of strict racial balance have no reservations about the long-term stability of mandatory school desegregation policies given the magnitude of "white flight." Even city-wide mandatory plans such as Boston, with large increases in inter-racial contact in the first year of desegregation, experience larger than normal rates of white withdrawal in post-implementation years and consistent large decreases in inter-racial contact as a result. Thus the expected long-term net benefit of mandatory plans can be deceptive. By 1981 in Boston, for example, the percentage white for the average Black student in the community based school (not the city-wide magnet) districts was lower than it was in 1968. Had the remedial action of the court been limited to a voluntary desegregation proposal that attained just a 10 point reduction in the segregation index, and had the public schools lost only 10,000 white students due to normal demographic factors rather than 31,000, then the percentage white for the average Black student would have been the same as it is now in districts schools under the mandatory plan (Ross and Rossell, 1981).

The most critical issue in this controversy is the need to make conceptual distinctions between different components of both voluntary and mandatory desegregation plans and then to derive systematic quantitative assessments for

the independent contribution each can make to the reduction of segregation at various stages in the desegregation process for Black, Hispanic and Asian minorities. For instance, the fact that Boston reduced the number of predominantly minority schools from forty-five to five (Smylie, 1981) was due primarily to their elimination through school closings and the mandatory reassignment of Black students to formerly white schools, rather than through mandatory reassignment of white students to these schools. Thus, the relative impact of mandatory white reassignments versus Black reassignments on the amount of desegregation should be evaluated in terms of differential white losses at the white neighborhood schools as well as at the formerly segregated minority schools. Similarly, a distinction must be made between different kinds of voluntary programs: controlled open-enrollment (parents are responsible for transportation), organized voluntary transfers, and magnet schools. Each type of program can produce different types of participation rates for each racial group at certain stages in the desegregation process, and the potential "success or failure" of any program can only be evaluated in relation to reasonable hypothetical objectives. The varied combination of voluntary and mandatory programs in Los Angeles provides an opportunity to evaluate the advantages of within-city analysis relative to the standard between-city comparative aggregate approach.

3. Background

The Los Angeles school desegregation experience presents a unique opportunity to deal critically with the important policy questions concerning the short-term and long-term effectiveness of alternative desegregation strategies. On a long-term basis, Los Angeles first developed a voluntary one-way transfer program of racially isolated minority students to predominantly white schools in 1968 with only 550 students. By 1972, the number of participants had increased to approximately 3,000 and the PWT (Permits With Transportation) program was gradually expanded in subsequent years (in particular 1977) reaching a total of 18,222 students at one hundred and fifty predominantly white receiving schools in 1978. In the spring of 1977, the district started to recruit white participants for voluntary transfer to selected minority schools (eleven), with limited success (144 participants) (Los Angles Unified School District, 1979 Vol I:10).

Also in 1977, a magnet program was initiated with four pre-existing "alternative" schools and three new magnet schools. In the following year, six more magnet schools, one fundamental and thirty-two magnet centers (special programs on the site of an existing school) were added. These programs had a total enrollment of 10,704 students including 4,788 white pupils. Grade levels were expanded and additional magnet centers were established in 1979 with 12,306 students (5,132 white). Not all of these magnets schools, especially those located in minority neighborhoods, attained the district's goal of forty to sixty percent white enrollment (Los Angles Unified School District, Vol. I, 1979:32-40), but the percentage white at the magnet schools located in minority areas was still higher (12.8%) than the typical racially isolated school (4.5%).

In 1978, Los Angeles initiated one of the largest court-ordered school desegregation plans in any urban area. Approximately 26,000 students in grades 4-6 from 116 elementary schools and 10,500 seventh and eighth grade students from thirteen junior high schools were organized into fifty-five pairs or clusters or midsites (PCM). Another 4600 students from thirty-six schools were assigned to midsite locations to reduce extensive travel time between schools. In 1977, the plan initially expected 29,000 white and 36,000 minority students from 184 schools to participate in the mandatory aspect of the program. Because of demographic factors and high rates of white non-attendance, the actual number of students was only 14,700 white and 26,300 minority students from 169 schools (Ross, 1981a).

4. The Measurement of Desegregation Outcomes:

The index most frequently used by school desegregation researchers to assess interracial school contact (or exposure) is derived from the percent white in the same school with the "average" minority student in the school district (Coleman, Kelly and Moore, 1975:22). In this analysis of Los Angeles, the index is calculated separately for each minority group [Blacks (S_{bw}), Hispanics (S_{hw}), and Asians (S_{aw})], rather than simply for the combined minorities, in order to statistically assess the similarities and differences between the three racial groups in their levels of exposure to white students. The value of this index can range from 0.0 to 100.0. As an absolute (or unstandardized) index, its value also reflects the degree of segregation between Black and white students in different schools within a district and the overall proportion of white students. If the percentage white within a school district is small, the

average Black student will have a low percentage white no matter how evenly these students are distributed between each school.

To illustrate the computational method used to construct the index value, the school by school data for a small subset of schools (an actual cluster) and the formula for S_{bw} is presented in Figure 1. In this example, all students who transfer to another white school outside the cluster or participate in magnet school programs are combined into one hypothetical "magnet/pwt" school. In addition, we will use the same data from this one cluster in Los Angeles to show how the different programs are assessed. For this example, the percentage white for the average Black student in these three schools is 43.8 percent based upon the distribution of all students (column 1) in the schools they actually attended. If the students only in the cluster are returned to their resident school (column 2), the amount of racial contact between Black and white students would be much smaller (S_{bw}=15.2%), or a net increase of 28.6 percent in racial contact due to mandatory reassignments. When the pupils in the voluntary program (n=54) are also sent back to their neighborhood school (column 3), the percentage white for the typical Black student is 12.8 percent or a change of +2.4 attributed to voluntary programs only.

In order to compare the relative degree of balance in one school district with another school district that has a different white enrollment, it is necessary to also have a standardized index (R) which adjusts for the overall percentage of white students in the different districts. This standardized index (R) is computed as the ratio of the percent white minus the unstandardized index, divided by the percent white (e.g. $R_{bw} = ((P_w - S_{bw})/P_w)*100$). A value of 100 indicates complete segregation and a value of 0 complete desegregation. The standardized index is also valuable in assessing the relative change within the same school district when the absolute level of interracial contact decreases (despite the implementation of a desegregation program) because of large in-migration of minority students or substantial white withdrawals. Likewise, separate comparison of elementary, junior and senior high schools can benefit from a standardized index to adjust for the different racial composition at each level.

How can these two indices help assess the relative effectiveness of voluntary and mandatory desegregation programs within one school district such as Los Angeles? In most studies, only one index value is computed for the entire district for each year and it is not possible to attribute any part of the

FIGURE I

Calculation of Desegregation Indices

	Column (1) Actual Enrollment		Column (2) PCM Students Returned		Column (3) All Students Returned (resident)	
	N Black	Percent White	N Black	Percent White	N Black	Percent White
Apperson	83	43.0%	9	73.1%	10	72.9%
Sunland	78	48.6	3	77.8	3	79.4
Fenton	186	40.3	335	10.7	351	10.5
"Magnet/PWT	17	63.0	17	63.0	—	
s_{bw}		43.8		15.2		12.8
R_{bw}		.9		65.6		71.0
Percent(P_w)		44.2		44.2		44.2

1. DEFINITION: $s_{bw} = \frac{\sum N_{b(i)} \times [P_{w(i)}]}{N_{b(i)}}$ where

$N_{b(i)}$ = # black students in school (i)
$P_{w(i)}$ = percent white students in school (i)

Calculations:

1) Actual s_{bw} $= \frac{(83x43.0)+(78x48.6)+(186x40.3)+(17x63.0)}{83+78+186+17} = 43.8$

2) Cluster s_{bw} $= \frac{(9x73.1)+(3x77.8)+(335x10.7)+(17x63)}{9+3+335+7} = 15.2$

3) Resident s_{bw} $= \frac{(10x72.9)+(3x79.4)+(351x10.5)}{10+3+351} = 12.8$

2. DEFINITION: $R_{bw} = \frac{P_w - s_{bw}}{P_w} * 100$ where

P_w = Total white percent

Calculations:

1) Actual R_{bw} $= \frac{44.2-43.8}{44.2} *100 = .9$

2) Cluster R_{bw} $= \frac{44.2-15.2}{44.2} *100 = 65.6$

3) Resident R_{bw} $= \frac{44.2-12.8}{44.2} *100 = 71.0$

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between-year change in interracial contact to a voluntary component rather than to a mandatory component. For example, if the unstandardized index (S_{bw}) for Black students had a value of 15.0 (the average Black student had 15 percent white) in the year before implementation of a school desegregation plan and 25.0 in the subsequent year, the change of 10.0 percent can not be allocated to any one component of a plan (mandatory or voluntary). In addition, this change score does not adjust for increases in the minority student population (which lowers the percentage white) nor does it consider the additional reduction in interracial contact produced by differential losses of white students assigned to schools in minority neighborhoods compared to predominantly white neighborhoods. If effectiveness is to be cited as a key criteria in the evaluation of alternative desegregation policies, the cost of mandatory reassignment, in terms of reduced opportunities for contact with white students, should be clearly identified.

For the Los Angeles Unified School District, school racial census files contain information on the sending school for each student and the type of transfer (PWT, MAGNET, PCM, etc.). Accordingly, the "desegregative" effect of each policy can be determined by returning in sequence subsets of students, one program at a time, back to their resident school and then calculating both the unstandardized and standardized contact indices for each program at each step. The differences in the interracial contact between the programs provides a measure of how much more exposure to white students is achieved for the average minority student by that particular transfer policy. The final step, when all students are returned back to their resident schools, is the baseline for all comparisons. Using this procedure, no adjustment is required for normal demographic trends since the same student population is used at each step. For example, comparison of the index values in Figure I shows an increase of 28.6% (s_{bw}) which is attributable, in this example, to mandatory reassignments and another 2.4 gain from voluntary desegregation policies. To asssess the effect of different components of voluntary transfers, the PWT and then the magnet students would be returned to their resident schools in a two step process, while the students who are mandatorily transferred would stay at their assigned school. It should be noted however that the effect of the mandatory component is assessed after white withdrawals have taken place and represents only the net desegregative effect. In the following section the results for the second year of court-ordered desegregation in Los Angeles (1979-1980) are presented.

5. Findings (1979):

In this section, the results for the unstandardized measure are first analyzed seperately for each minority group to show the desegregative effect of voluntary and mandatory programs within elementary, junior and senior high schools. Then the standardized measures are presented to provide an overall estimate of each program that can be compared with other cities despite different racial compositions in their public school systems.

In Table 1, the absolute increase in interracial contact produced by voluntary and mandatory programs is summarized separately for each minority group (Black,Hispanic, and Asian). First, for Black students in elementary schools, 8.0 percent of the average Black students classmates are white (S_{bw}=7.96:row A) when all students are returned to their resident school. When only students who participate in the mandatory program (PCM) are sent back to their resident schools, the students still in place represent the resident population plus the voluntary transfers (PWT + Magnets). In this situation, the average Black student has 11.2 percent white classmates (S_{bw}=11.16:row B) in his school. Thus, the difference (+3.2%) between the resident and the PWT/Magnet contact indices represents the desegregative effect of voluntary programs in increasing the amount of interracial contact between Black and white students. If no students are returned back to their resident school (i.e., the actual racial composition of the school) the average Black student now has 12.6 percent white in his school (S_{bw}=12.56:row C). This difference (+1.4%) between the actual and PWT-Magnet is the net incremental desegregative effect of mandatory reassignment policies only in increasing Black student contact with whites.

The larger differential effect of voluntary programs relative to mandatory reassignments in terms of the percentage white for the average Black student is clear both at the elementary (3.2 versus 1.4) and at the junior high school level (9.4% versus 4.0%) by, at least, a two-to-one ratio. At the senior high school level (where there is no mandatory reassignment of students in Los Angeles), the percentage white for the average Black student nearly doubles (from 11.0% to 20.2%) as a result of voluntary transfers (PWT) of Black students from racially isolated schools to predominantly white schools and to a variety of magnet programs.

It should be noted that the effect of these voluntary programs does not represent a one-year phenomena. Rather, the number of Black students

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Table 1

Absolute Amount of Racial Contact: Mandatory vs. Voluntary Comparisons
(Unstandardized Contact Indices)
1979 Elementary, Junior High and Senior High Schools

	Percentage White for the Average Minority Student			
	Black S_{bw}	Hisp. S_{hw}	Asian S_{aw}	Combined Minority S_{cw}
Elementary Schools				
A. Resident	7.96%	12.11%	28.44%	12.38%
B. PWI-Magnet	11.16	13.03	28.48	13.86
VOLUNTARY: Diff(B-A)	+3.20	+.92	+.04	+1.48
C. PCM	12.56	14.30	27.10	14.83
MANDATORY: Diff(C-B)	+1.40	+1.27	-1.38	+0.97
Junior High Schools				
A. Resident	7.60	18.45	32.69	15.67
B. PWI-Magnet	16.95	18.84	32.35	19.53
VOLUNTARY: Diff(B-A)	+9.35	+.39	-.34	+3.86
C. PCM	20.99	19.29	30.94	21.03
MANDATORY: Diff(C-B)	+4.04	+.45	-1.41	+1.50
Senior High School (voluntary only)				
A. Resident	10.98	21.42	33.60	18.70
B. PWI-Magnet	20.15	21.60	33.24	22.50
VOLUNTARY: Diff(B-A)	+9.17	+.18	-.36	+3.80

participating in both the PWT and the magnet programs has grown over the last few years. At the same time, it is not likely that these voluntary transfers were ever responsible for any significant elevated rate of "white flight" at white receiving schools participating in the PWT program. Thus, the significant increase in desegregation produced by voluntary methods in Los Angeles does not bear the substantial costs of white withdrawals incurred by the mandatory components of the Los Angeles program.

The results for Hispanic students however, does differ considerably from the trends for Black students. One finds in Table 1 only a small increase in the percent white for the average Hispanic student for both voluntary and mandatory programs. At the elementary school levels, voluntary transfer and magnet programs produce only a .9% increase in the percent white for the average Hispanic student, while the mandatory reassignment of students contributes a slightly higher increase of 1.3% to the amount of desegregation for Hispanics. In junior high schools, both voluntary and mandatory programs combined add less than .8% to the percent white in schools attended by the average Hispanic student. Given the size of the Hispanic student population in Los Angeles, relative to the other two minority groups (especially in the elementary schools), the lack of Hispanic student participation in established voluntary school desegregation programs will require special consideration in future desegregation planning. The high level (S_{hw}=41.4%) of exposure to white students for Hispanics in court areas 1-7 (which contain approximately 40 percent of the total Hispanic enrollment), however, does indicate a substantial amount of residential integration.

Likewise, the degree of desegregation for Asian students in the Los Angeles public schools does not appear to be affected by mandatory or voluntary transfer policies. If there is any impact, the mandatory component in fact appears to slightly reduce the overall level of contact between Asian and white students (-1.2% and -1.4% at the elementary and junior high school level). This negative effect is due, in part, to a) the mandatory transfer of Asian students attending predominantly white schools to another school within a cluster which has a lower percentage white and b) to the drop in the percentage white at the resident school when whites are re-assigned out and other minority students re-assigned in.

The results for "combined minority" (S_{cw}) are also reported to provide comparability with other tabulations based on this racial classification. For

the most part, this calculation is misleading to the extent that each minority group included in the combined category not only starts out at a different level of integration with the white student population in terms of residential patterns, but also each group appears to respond differently to the various voluntary school desegregation programs.

The above findings based upon the unstandardized contact indices do not facilitate any assessment concerning the magnitude of the Los Angeles desegregation plan relative to similar desegregation programs in other cities. For comparison purposes, the standardized index (R) is more valuable to determine:

a) The degree of racial imbalance based upon existing residential attendance zones;
b) The desegregative effect of student redistribution policies to non-neighborhood schools by either voluntary or mandatory reassignments; and
c) How much further would the district have to go to reach "perfect balance," (i.e. an index value of 0).

As expected, we find in Table 2 that Black students (63.4, 73.6, 70.4) have the highest standardized value of segregation (based upon the residential distribution i.e. all students returned to their resident schools), followed by Hispanics (44.4, 36.0, 42.3), and then Asians (-30.6, -13.5, and 9.4) at each grade level (elementary, junior and senior high schools respectively). This rank ordering (Black, Hispanic, Asian) is consistent at all educational levels, indicating that the largest amount of residential segregation is between Black and white students. Only the Asian students show a large difference between the elementary (-30.6) and senior high schools (+9.4). The -30.6 index value for Asian elementary students (the other groups are positive) indicates that Asians have more contact with whites than if they were evenly distributed in all schools (i.e. they are over-represented in schools with higher proportions white). The change in segregation score from senior high to elementary, suggests more residential assimilation by Asians into white neighborhoods by younger families (possibly second or third generation). If this trend continues into the future, then the inclusion of Asians within a combined minority grouping should obviously be reconsidered.

For Black students, the degree of imbalance (R_{bw}) in elementary schools is reduced -14.7 points by voluntary transfers and again by another -6.4 points by

Table 2
Relative Amount of Racial Contact: Mandatory vs. Voluntary Comparisons
(Standardized Contact Indices)[a]
1979 Elementary, Junior High and Senior High Schools

	Relative Distribution of Racial Contact			
	Black R_{bw}	Hisp. R_{hw}	Asian R_{aw}	Combined Minority R_{cw}
Elementary Schools				
A. Resident	63.45	44.40	-30.58	43.16
B. PWT-Magnet	48.76	40.17	-30.76	36.36
VOLUNTARY: Diff(B-A)	-14.69	-4.22	-.18	-6.80
C. PCM	42.33	34.33	-24.43	31.91
MANDATORY: Diff(C-B)	-6.43	-5.83	+6.33	-4.45
Junior High Schools				
A. Resident	73.62	35.97	-13.45	45.62
B. PWT-Magnet	41.17	34.61	-12.27	32.22
VOLUNTARY: Diff(B-A)	-32.45	-1.36	+1.18	-13.40
C. PCM	27.15	33.05	-7.38	27.01
MANDATORY: Diff(C-B)	-14.02	-1.58	+4.89	-5.21
Senior High Schools (voluntary only)				
A. Resident	70.40	42.25	9.41	49.60
B. PWT-Magnet	45.66	41.75	10.36	39.40
VOLUNTARY: Diff(B-A)	-24.74	-.80	+.95	-10.20

[a] Percent white 21.78 Elementary Schools and 28.81 Junior High Schools

mandatory reassignments. At the junior high level, the standardized index drops -32.5 and -14.0 points for voluntary and mandatory respectively. The voluntary transfers from minority schools to white schools at the senior high level also contributes to a substantial reduction in racial imbalance from 70.4 to 45.7 for Black students.

For Hispanic students, the observed small effect of desegregation policies on their distribution within public schools, shown previously for the unstandardized index, is confirmed by the standardized index (R_{hw}). Voluntary programs reduce the degree of segregation 4.2 points at the elementary level and 1.4 points at the junior high level. Mandatory reassignments provide equally small reductions of 5.8 and 1.6 points in the segregation index at the elementary and junior high schools respectively. For Asian students, we find both voluntary and mandatory programs generally have small "positive" effects (rather than negative) among elementary and junior high school children. In other words, redistribution policies place Asian students in schools where they are less likely to be over-represented in schools with higher percentage white students. How one evaluates these changes in racial segregation depends upon whether the objective of a desegregation plan is to maximize equal distrtibution in the schools for all minority groups or to increase the relative amount of contact with white students.

The relative importance of mandatory versus voluntary desegregation for each minority group does not change since each calculation of R is based upon the same percent white. For Black students, the magnitude of the change in the standardized index for voluntary desegregation programs only is large for elementary schools (-14.7), and considerably larger for both junior (-32.5) and senior (-24.7) high schools. In contrast, the additional reduction in racial isolation accomplished by the mandatory assignments of students (pairs, clusters and midsites) appears to be quite small in terms of reducing the overall imbalance in the distribution of Black students throughout the district. At a district-wide level for all grades, the net reduction in the standardized index (R_{bw}) is -29.3 points for voluntary transfers and -6.5 points for the mandatory reassignments. This change in the segregation index solely attributable to voluntary desegregation policies exceeds the reduction in racial imbalance (R_{bw}) achieved by many court-ordered mandatory northern desegregation plans in the

North such as San Francisco (-25.7) in 1971; Indianapolis (-18.2) in 1973; and Denver (-11.5) in 1974 (Coleman et al., 1975: Appendix 2; Taeuber and Wilson 1979).

6. Magnet Schools

Some special qualifying comments are necessary on the desegregative impact of the magnet school program in the context of the combined mandatory/magnet policy in Los Angeles. Logically, it is possible that the effectiveness of voluntary policies in Los Angeles is due solely to the options provided by magnet schools when the alternative choice is mandatory reassignment. In other words, it is logically possible that the effectiveness of the magnet school programs in Los Angeles is the result of the mandatory reassignment "back-up" component in the desegregation plan. This would suggest that white enrollment in magnet school programs would be much lower without mandatory reassignments. Conversely, it might also suggest that there would be more desegregation in cluster schools were there no magnet option. In other words, if students could not transfer to a magnet school in order to avoid mandatory reassignment to a minority receiver school, the percentage white in the cluster schools would be higher and hence there would be higher levels of interracial contact attributable to mandatory programs.

First, only a fraction (less than 10 percent) of the white withdrawals from cluster schools can be attributed to participation in magnet school programs rather than transfers to private schools or relocation outside of the district (Ross, 1979;1981b). Therefore, even if all the magnet school students were returned to their resident schools, the percentage white in the PCM schools would be only one or two percentage points higher. Moreover, the five percent of the white student enrollment in grades 4-6 from cluster schools who are enrolled in magnet schools in 1979 did not reflect a pattern indicative of simple avoidance of mandatory reassignment to non-neighborhood schools or magnet school attendance only in the year of such reassignment. For example, we find 6.5 percent of the fifth and sixth grade students assigned to a minority receiver for the first time in 1979, attending a magnet school. In contrast, 3.5 percent of the students in the same grades who returned to their resident school after being reassigned to a minority school in the prior year were still enrolled in magnet schools. Magnet school enrollment, however, was also high (3.9 percent) for fifth and sixth grade students who were never assigned to a minority school for two consecutive years.

Table 3

Magnet School Program (1979): Participation Rates by Race

Elementary Schools	Percent White for Average Student		Participation Rate	Desegregative Impact
Black	30.4%	(2879)	2.4%	+1.0%
Hispanic	34.8	(1211)	.9	+ .2
Asian	52.5	(573)	2.9	+ .7
Junior High Schools				
Black	26.0%	(1612)	5.1%	+ .9%
Hispanic	30.7	(569)	1.3	+ .2
Asian	42.4	(195)	2.5	+ .2

Second, the desegregative impact of the magnet program is not large enough to appreciably reduce the contribution of the PWT program to the reduction in segregation, and thereby alter any of the above conclusions about the relative effectiveness of voluntary one-way transfers. To clarify this point, relevant summary information on magnet school programs in 1979 are presented in Table 3.

The amount of interracial contact with white students for the average Black, Hispanic and Asian student is higher in the magnet schools than in the "desegregated" cluster schools, despite the fact that several magnet schools did not attract substantial white enrollment. In addition, the participation rate for each minority group is relatively low compared to white students (5.8% at the elementary level and 4.3% at junior high) such that even small increases in these participation rates could still produce even more desegregation attributable to voluntary programs in future years.

These statistics allow one to generate estimates for the net desegregative effect of magnet programs only. This estimate is based upon the assumption that without any magnet school program, the percent white for each minority student would equal the white percentage derived from the distribution of students if they were returned to their resident school. Under these assumptions, one finds a net increase in minority student contact with white students primarily among Black children; although it is only a small fraction of the total effect for voluntary programs. For Hispanic and Asian students the net desegregaative effect for magnet programs is still small but positive. It is possible that most of the Hispanic and Asian student enrollment in magnet school programs comes from the predominantly white schools in clusters subject to mandatory reassignment rather than racially isolated minority schools. If this is the case, then the net desegregative effect for magnet school programs would be much lower.

7. Conclusion:

Do these findings reveal something dramatic about the implementation of voluntary desegregation in Los Angeles that has not been recognized? Probably not. Each year minority student participation in the PWT program has increased. In two years, magnet programs have also become well established and have attracted a stable white student population. Los Angeles has successfully eliminated as much racial imbalance between Black and white students through voluntary transfers over a five to six year period as Milwaukee accomplished

with a court ordered reassignment plan, primarily of Black students, in 1976. If two years of mandatory reassignment of white and Black students had not led to an accelerated rate of district-wide loss of white students (Ross 1981c), the amount of desegregation in Los Angeles might have been even greater.

The final assessment of voluntary desegregation programs in Los Angeles may have to wait until enrollment data for the 1981-1982 school year, when the mandatory programs are completely dismantled, are analysed. If the viability of magnet programs and centers is threatened by the return of white students to their resident schools, then certain conclusions may have to be reconsidered. However, preliminary examination of magnet school enrollments does not suggest that these schools were selected by white parents primarily as a devise to escape mandatory reassignments. If these schools do retain most of their white students, (e.g. a minimal white participation level is achieved), additional students may choose these special programs in the future.

This does not preclude intensified efforts to recruit more white students for magnet schools in minority neighborhoods. The fact that few white students initially volunteer to attend these schools is not a sufficient reason to reject all voluntary programs as ineffective. Such a judgement must also consider how many white students actually attend minority schools when they are mandatorily reassigned. Analysis of enrollment trends in Los Angeles indicates at least fifty percent of white students are lost when they are mandatorily reassigned to a school in a minority area (Ross 1981a, Ross 1981c). Even then, the amount of desegregation achieved in Los Angeles was not that large (barely thirty percent), and it certainly was not stable. The critical resources (i.e. white students) necessary to desegregate these schools with a satisfactory level of white participation (between forty to sixty percent) have been expended in Los Angeles by three years of mandatory reassignment policies, including a costly expansion of the plan in 1980-1981 to include grades one through three. If the plan had been continued, most of the "desegregated" minority schools would have only fifteen to twenty percent white within two to three years, a percentage white not viewed by most social scientists as conducive to an "integrated" school experience. Moreover, fewer white students would be present in the formerly white segregated schools. Although there is a significant re-entry of white students back to their resident school in the year following their assignment to a minority school, this does not compensate for the loss of students incurred in prior years.

Of course, it is possible to redistribute the diminishing number of white students in the pursuit of some abstract goal of perfect racial balance, but any yearly adjustments to the assignment criteria would produce additional white withdrawals and reduce the already scarce resources available for desegregation even further. In retrospect, one has to question how many (obviously not all) of these minority schools could have eventually been desegregated had they been reconstituted as magnet schools. For Black students, it is possible that the district is close to an upper limit of Black participation in voluntary one-way transfers. Further reductions in the degree of racial imbalance could be achieved through mandatory reassignment of Black students only to white schools beyond the utilization of satellite zoning to relieve overcrowding. Implementation of such a program in the context of a variety of clearly defined voluntary programs should distinguish these participants from other minority students in desegregated schools. Finally, there still remains the issue of new and expanded voluntary desegregation initiatives. The above analysis suggests that additional Hispanic-white integration has to be carefully examined particularly in regard to voluntary programs.

This analysis of alternative student assignment techniques in Los Angeles has more general methodological and analytic implications for the assessment of multi-ethnic desegregation policy issues. First, it is important to emphasize that the simple bi-ethnic (Black-white) framework derived from small, completely segregated school districts in the South has limited utility in the evaluation of large multi-ethnic school districts in the North. In other words, the criteria for "effective" policies in the former case may not be appropriate considerations for the latter situation because critical factors are ignored. Clearly the number of minority groups, their relative student population, long term migration patterns, and the degree of residential segregation for each group play an integral role in the outcome of any voluntary or mandatory reassignment plan.

The long-term trends in Los Angeles prior to 1977 (c.f. Table 4.a) indicate that the Black student population, the largest minority group in 1968, had remained basically stable in size while the Hispanic enrollment had increased 48 percent by 1976 and replaced Blacks as the largest group. At the same time, there was a high degree of Black-white (86.0) segregation in 1968 relative to Hispanic-white (40.8) segregation, but over time the absolute amount of interracial contact was moving in different directions for each group. Thus,

Table 4

Racial Contact Indices: Los Angeles and other Western cities 1968-1978

		s_{bw}	s_{hw}	s_{ow}	r_{bw}	r_{hw}	r_{ow}	Percent White	Percent Black	Percent Hisp.	Percent Asian
4.a	Los Angeles										
	1968	7.5%	31.8%	41.9%	86.0	40.8	22.0	53.7%	22.6%	20.0%	3.6%
	1969	7.6	32.0	41.3	85.4	38.8	20.9	52.2	23.5	20.8	3.4
	1970	7.9	31.2	40.6	84.4	38.2	19.4	50.4	24.1	21.8	3.5
	1971	8.4	30.7	41.5	82.7	37.0	15.0	48.8	24.9	22.7	3.4
	1972	9.2	29.7	40.9	79.9	37.2	13.6	47.3	25.2	23.9	3.4
	1973	9.3	26.9	38.9	79.1	39.5	12.6	44.4	25.4	25.5	4.5
	1974	10.2	25.0	37.6	75.6	40.3	10.2	41.9	24.8	27.8	5.1
	1976	11.0	21.0	36.0	69.8	42.4	1.4	36.5	24.5	32.2	4.9
	1978	15.4	19.4	- .	48.2	34.9	- .	29.7	24.7	38.5	6.5
4.b	San Francisco										
	1970	23.6	35.9	32.0	35.9	2.1	13.2	36.9	28.5	13.6	20.8
	1971	30.5	30.5	31.7	10.2	10.2	6.3	33.9	30.4	13.8	21.6
	1976	25.9	25.4	27.1	6.2	8.1	2.1	27.6	29.1	14.0	28.6
	1978	18.1	18.2	- .	12.0	11.3	- .	20.5	28.9	15.1	34.9
4.c	Denver										
	1968	20.3	46.1	- .	69.1	29.7	- .	66.7	14.1	19.3	.7
	1969	34.0	44.4	- .	46.9	30.7	- .	64.1	14.4	20.5	.8
	1973	39.2	39.4	- .	31.1	30.8	- .	56.9	17.8	24.1	.8
	1974	43.7	44.3	- .	19.6	18.5	- .	54.4	18.3	25.8	.9
	1976	47.8	44.2	- .	.7	8.1	- .	48.1	20.8	29.0	1.5
	1978	44.8	40.2	- .	-1.0	9.5	- .	44.4	22.0	31.0	2.0
4.d	San Diego										
	1968	26.3	57.8	69.0	65.5	24.1	9.4	76.2	11.6	10.1	2.0
	1970	28.7	57.4	74.1	58.4	23.8	1.7	75.4	12.4	10.6	1.4
	1972	33.1	56.0	75.9	55.1	24.1	-3.1	73.7	13.3	11.3	1.6
	1974	37.8	54.0	74.9	48.2	25.9	-3.3	72.5	13.6	11.9	1.9
	1976	35.0	46.2	61.3	46.8	29.8	6.8	65.8	14.5	14.0	5.4
	1978	39.1	43.7	- .	36.7	29.2	- .	61.7	15.0	15.7	7.3
4.e	San Bernadino										
	1968	36.3	44.1	- .	45.0	33.2	- .	66.0	14.6	18.8	.5
	1970	42.0	47.3	- .	35.0	26.5	- .	64.5	15.4	19.4	.5
	1972	45.8	51.6	- .	27.0	17.7	- .	62.7	15.6	20.9	.6
	1974	46.8	49.1	- .	24.5	20.8	- .	62.0	15.1	21.8	.9
	1976	47.7	48.0	- .	21.5	21.0	- .	60.8	15.3	22.6	1.2
	1978	48.1	47.0	- .	13.0	15.0	- .	55.3	16.2	25.6	1.8

Source: (Farley,1981; Taeuber and Wilson, 1979)

the percentage white for the average Black student increased from 7.5 percent in 1968 to 11.0 percent in 1976 despite a decline in white student enrollment. The comparable figure for Hispanics was a decrease from 31.8 percent to 21.0 percent white for the typical Hispanic pupil. The relative measure of interracial contact also showed similar divergence during this same time period: a decline in 16.2 points (R_{bw}) for Blacks and a slight rise of 1.6 points (R_{hw}) for Hispanics. The third largest minority group, Asian, was also growing (63 percent during this nine year period), but there was minimal segregation in 1968 in terms of relative exposure to white students (R_{ow}= 22.0) and it became even less segregated by 1976(R_{ow}=1.4).

Under ideal circumstances, the desired objective of any desegregation plan would be to increase the absolute amount of contact with white students and at the same time reduce the relative degree of segregation for <u>all</u> minority groups. In multi-ethnic districts, the "best" method of student reassignments to achieve this objective is not "a priori" simple as the case of Los Angeles demonstrates. Mandatory reassignments of particular groups already substantially desegregated by residential neighborhood will require a large number of transfers to different schools where the percentage white will be lower than the resident school without any type of transfer. Moreover, if there is differential attrition of white students, particularly at the formerly segregated school, then the net gain in interracial contact can actually be negative for this group even though there might be a more "balanced" distribution of students. This was certainly the case for Asian pupils in Los Angeles in 1979. Even for Hispanics, the largest group with continuing increases in student population, the desegregative effect of mandatory reassignments from segregated schools was also reduced by the assignment of the large number of students already attending predominantly white schools to formerly segregated schools and the flow of new students into predominantly minority attendance areas in other parts of the city. Black students had the most potential for the largest increases with a city-wide mandatory plan to the degree that residential segregation was high. However, small but consistent changes in the amount of desegregation attributable to voluntary transfers in the pre-1976 period should have suggested that the implementation of a mandatory plan might be premature until an upper limit in Black participation in the one-way transfer plan had been reached and the magnet school programs had been established. Certainly, any consideration of the interrelationship between the total effect of even a partial plan on net

changes in interracial contact with whites for Hispanics and Asians with conservative assumptions about the magnitude of "white flight" would have shown that any mandatory plan would produce the minimal results that have been documented in the above analysis.

Los Angeles does not appear to be a unique case. A review of two other multi-ethnic cities, San Francisco and Denver, with court ordered mandatory plans show similar problems for other minority groups. As noted previously, the percentage white for the average Black student (the largest minority) increased 7 percent in the first year of the San Francisco mandatory plan (c.f. Table 4.b) and then declined by 5 percent in subsequent years. For the second largest (22 percent) minority group (Asians), who already were moderately desegregated, a 9.6 point reduction in the standardized measure of segregation actually produced a small decrease of .3 percent in contact with whites for the average Asian student. In the next five years, the amount of contact with whites dropped by another 4.6 percent, or a net loss of 4.9 percent. Lastly, Hispanics, the third largest (14 percent) minority group did not experience any increased exposure to white pupils in 1971 (5.4 percent decline) and the percentage white for the typical Hispanic student also decreased another 5.1 percent in subsequent years as above normal white withdrawal substantially reduced the number of white students in San Francisco. By 1978, the degree of racial segregation for both Blacks and Hispanics increased while the the amount of contact with white students fell below pre-court order levels.

Denver (c.f. Table 4.c), also, exhibits minimal gains in interracial contact despite continued reassignments in 1974 and 1976 of both Black and Hispanic (the largest minority group) students. Black students actually had the largest gain (20.3 to 34.0 in the percent white for the average child) in 1969 prior to the 1974 district-wide court ordered plan as measured by the change in the absolute amount of contact with whites and relative reduction of segregation (a 22.2 point decline). Court-ordered reassignments did produce further gains in 1974 and 1976, but these increases were not any larger than the yearly change prior to court intervention. In comparison, only in 1974 did Hispanic students, who were only moderately segregated (R_{hw}=29.7) in 1969, benefit from mandatory reassignment in terms of contact with whites. With long term "white flight" again a problem, the amount of minority group exposure to whites was sliding back to pre-court order levels by 1978.

Effectiveness of alternative desegregation strategies

In contrast to San Francisco and Denver, two comparable multi-ethnic cities (San Diego and San Bernadino) with voluntary transfer programs demonstrate smaller but consistent year-to-year changes in the amount of interracial contact and segregation for Black students. In San Diego (c.f. Table 4.d), the percent white for the typical Black pupil increased from 26.3 in 1968 to 39.1 percent in 1978 and in San Bernadino (c.f. Table 4.e) the comparable percentage gain was 11.8 percent during this ten year period. For both cities, the reduction in the standardized measure (R_{bw}) of segregation in any single year was less than San Francisco or Denver in their major implementation year. However, the total decline of 29.9 points in San Diego and 32.0 points in San Bernadino during this ten year period is still comparable to the single year impact of court-ordered mandatory plans in San Francisco and Denver. For Hispanic pupils, one finds a pattern similar to Los Angeles, i.e., little change in racial contact with whites up to 1972 in both cities, followed by small increases in the magnitude of the segregation index in subsequent years as the Hispanic student population became larger.

A general pattern is apparent from these cities that is consistent with the findings from Los Angeles. Voluntary plans can be more effective in the long run in multi-ethnic cities in terms of both increasing minority student exposure to white students, and at the same time reducing substantial amounts of school segregation due to residential housing decisions. Clearly, more conceptual work is needed to identify (and measure) the <u>minimal amount</u> of <u>participation</u> in voluntary plans necessary to achieve acceptable levels of desegregation, and the <u>expected rate of white non-participation</u> in mandatory plans which can prove counterproductive in the long run. Then, the relative trade-offs can be more systematically assessed for each minority group in different types of cities and the issue of effectiveness can be addressed from a common set of objective criteria.

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